

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Specification as follows:

Page 1, lines 1 – 9, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

The invention relates to an endoscope with hygiene protection, which ~~consists of~~ includes a cover, which is closed at the distal end thereof and which is transmissible for optical information at least on its front side, and which can be rolled on in the manner of a condom in the axial direction of the endoscope and which ~~consists of~~ has one or more working channels which extend parallel to the endoscope and terminate in an open manner at the distal end of the cover. The invention further relates to a method for applying an elastic endoscope protection intended for one-off use.

Page 2, lines 4 – 8, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

To avoid these difficulties, various disposable endoscope covers have already been proposed in, e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,741,326; U.S. Patent No. 5,201,908; U.S. Patent No. 5,217,001; and Federal Republic of Germany patent specification DE 199 18 488. ~~(U.S. Pat. No. 4,741,326), (U.S. 005217001 A), (U.S. Pat. No. 5,201,908), (DE 199 18 488).~~ Despite the evident large demand for endoscope protection covers, interestingly none of these covers has so far become established on the market.

Page 2, line 9 – Page 3, line 4, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

~~Document (U.S. 005217001 A)~~ U.S. Patent No. 5,217,001 discloses various embodiments of an endoscope protection cover: In one of the embodiments, the cover consists of

a rigid material, which, for attachment of the cover, must be pushed for its entire length over the distal tip of the endoscope. To facilitate this operation, the interior diameter of the cover is dimensioned to be bigger than the outer diameter of the endoscope. After the distal end of the endoscope lies against the distal end of the cover, that part of the cover that does not bear against the outside of the endoscope is folded back, closures being provided in the longitudinal direction, and based on the zip-lock principle, in order to fix the folded-back sleeve in the longitudinal direction. The disadvantage of this embodiment, apart from the complicated attachment of this cover, is its rigidity and the higher manufacturing costs needed for attaching the closures running in the longitudinal direction. In a further development of this endoscope protection, the cover does not have a zip lock-like closure but an airtight balloon-like cover, which lies against the inside of the cover. This balloon-like sleeve, to which air can be applied, ~~so that~~ provides that the endoscope protection bears firmly against the shaft of the endoscope. The major disadvantage of this embodiment consists in the volume increase of the endoscope, since, in the interest of the patient, any volume increase of the endoscope must be avoided, since the introduction of an endoscope with a large diameter can be very painful. The somewhat rigid cover of the two aforementioned embodiments comprises tubes which run in the wall of the cover parallel to the endoscope shaft and serve as working channels.

Page 3, lines 5 – 12, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

In an alternative embodiment, U.S. Patent No. 5,217,001, (~~U.S. 005217001-A~~) discloses an endoscope protection which can be rolled on in the manner of a condom, which, at the distal end, just like to the two first-mentioned embodiments from that document, com-

prise a transmissible window. Additional working channels are not provided in the endoscope protection, which can be rolled on in the manner of a condom. Its use is therefore restricted in a disadvantageous manner to optical control, and precludes the taking of biopsies.

Page 4, lines 10 – 22, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

In addition to the working channels, in the endoscope protection according to the invention, at least one vacuum channel is provided. The vacuum channel ~~terminate~~ terminates in an open manner within the envelope of the endoscope protection and can have additional side openings. These side openings terminate at the inside of the cover. When a vacuum is applied to this channel, the air located between the cover and endoscope shaft is sucked out, with the consequence that the cover is drawn firmly onto the endoscope. The vacuum is maintained during the examination. This, a fixed connection between the cover and endoscope, is produced advantageously rapidly after the endoscope has been introduced comfortably into the cover, which is dimensioned somewhat larger in the interior diameter, preferably in the proximal part.

Page 4, line 23 – 27, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

During application of the hygiene protection, one hand fixes the freely movable working channels and vacuum channels on the endoscope shaft, while the other hand rolls on the cover above the channels, which cover is rolled up in the manner of a condom or folded up ~~in the manner of~~ as a bar. ~~(sie)~~.

Page 4, line 28 – Page 5, line 15, rewrite this paragraph as follows:

The gist of the invention ~~consists in~~ comprises the combination of the condom-like protective cover with its own working channels, which extend outside the endoscope, the protective cover and the working channels being connected to one another in the distal region of the cover in an airtight, germ-tight and watertight manner. For attachment of the protection cover according to the invention, the distal end of the cover is pushed onto the endoscope, so that the front face, which is transmissible for optical information, is correctly positioned, i.e. positioned parallel to the distal end of the endoscope. The optical contact between the endoscope and the transparent front face of the cover is preferably produced by means of a fluid, such as, ~~[[a]]~~ microscope immersion oil, which ideally has the same refractive index as the lens of the endoscope. During application of the endoscope protection, the channels are fixed to the endoscope with one hand, while the other hand pushes the cover, which is rolled up in the manner of a condom or folded up in the manner of a ball, ~~(sic)~~, over the outside of the condom, ~~(sic)~~, so that the cover, besides enclosing the endoscope, also encloses the working channels.

Page 5, lines 16 – 20, rewrite the following paragraph:

It lies within the scope of the invention that the hygiene ~~protectin~~ protection is used for medical endoscopes whose diameter may be variable. Besides endoscopes for examining the ~~oesophagus~~ esophagus and all digestive organs, endoscopes are expressly included that are used in ear, nose and throat medicine.

Page 6, lines 12 – 17, rewrite the following paragraph:

It lies within the scope of the invention that the internal diameter of the cover is, at least in the proximal part of the cover, slightly greater than the outer diameter of the endoscope. It is thereby advantageously possible to lay the cover against the endoscope. This is true in particular when the cover can be folded up ~~in the manner of~~ as a bar. ~~(sic).~~

Page 8, lines 20 – 25, rewrite the following paragraph:

It lies within the scope of the invention that during the ~~utilization~~ utilization of the endoscope a subatmospheric pressure is applied to the vacuum channel or to the vacuum channels. Because of the seal of the cover at the proximal end, however, it is not absolutely necessary for the subatmospheric pressure to be applied continually during the endoscope use.